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Voices of Erin



BY
JOHN J. WALSH
AND
MICHAEL J. NEARY

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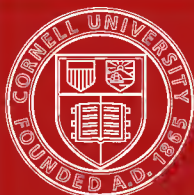
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Voices of Erin

By
John J. Walsh
and
Michael J. Neary



SECOND EDITION

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JOHN J. WALSH
AND
MICHAEL J. NEARY



JOHN J. WALSH

DEDICATION



We dedicate these humble poems
To those, above all others,
Who love us most, who gave us most,
Whom we love most—our mothers.

M. J. N.

J. J. W.

FOREWORD



In this, our first venture into the realm of literature, we ask our readers to consider the spirit more than the merit of our work. We have written under disadvantages—in spare moments snatched from the study of the classics, and other disadvantages known but to ourselves. We cherish the hope of doing better things in the future but, perhaps, this is always what “dreaming poets sing.”

We do not wish for fame, but only a kindly place in the hearts of those who know us. We wish our faults to be forgiven, and to have the good will of our friends in all our efforts.

MICHAEL J. NEARY,
JOHN J. WALSH,

*St. Joseph's Seminary,
Baltimore, Md.*

June 1st, 1917.

INTRODUCTION



Poetry is today, as it always has been, a source of the greatest pleasure to most of us; nor is there anything in use by man, for power of good, to equal it. Poetry, of the right kind, stimulates all that is good and noble in our nature.

Poets, those who sing of God; the human soul, the rippling rill, the thundering ocean; the serenity of domestic bliss; the consolation of sympathy, have verily a divine vocation, and we should rather encourage their numbers than stifle their aspirations. Hence, with this idea uppermost in our mind, we may as well welcome the productions herewith given to the world. The authors—Messrs. J. J. Walsh and M. J. Neary—are not vain enough, nor are we who wish them success optimistic enough, to think that those productions shall revolutionize poetry; but we who wish them success are conscious of the fact that what these productions lack in poetical diction, they endeavor to supply in purity of thought, simplicity of dress, and sublimity of aspiration.

Let us give credit to those young authors who, like Pope, “have lisped in numbers for the numbers came”; and, because their souls tingled with those ideas, poetic, pure, lofty, they now venture the indulgence of the world with the expectation that hearts responsive to genuine aspirations will add to those productions the approval of their commendation; not, of course, that those productions will or can wholly merit unstinted commendation, but we cannot forget and, however presumptuous the excuse, we should

make allowance for the fact that they were written in spare moments during their authors' years in Epiphany College (Baltimore) from which, as the college records prove, those young men have graduated with distinction.

It may seem, but is not an excuse of mediocre abilities when we ask: Why expect from those humble authors what no author has ever given us, namely, perfection? It must be admitted that those authors' poetry is no vain display of hollow-sounding trumpets, nor does it present the hectic flush of artificiality—it is the simple outpourings of pure thoughts in humble garb; its purpose is not to dazzle, nor yet to serve as a criterion of poetry, but that readers may find in it what its authors have found—an innocent entertainment.

Whatever their shortcomings, we may truly say these poems, written on various subjects, show a love for truth and justice, and these are qualities which may well recommend them to the public. A lofty thought, clothed in the garb of poetry, is, like our Revolution's "soldiers in their ragged regimentals," poor in external show, but intrinsically wealthy; rich in purpose, bearing a heart pure, good, inspiring.

We have no hesitation in commending this little volume of poems to the public; because, even if it has nothing extraordinary to commend it, it has, at least, nothing to hinder its success, and we congratulate the young authors who are aspiring to the priesthood and at present studying in St. Joseph's Seminary, Baltimore. It will give them an opportunity to teach and practice those virtues which their poems so truly inculcate; and, that those poems and their authors may be successful in this, and every undertaking that can rightly claim purity its cause; the spread of morality

its guide, and the greater glory of God its motive, we anticipate, on their behalf, the approval and support of those who still appreciate honest effort and who, like our authors, are willing to advance that which aims at the furtherance of Truth, Right, and Christian Love.

REV. JOS. P. HANLEY,

Rector, Epiphany College, Baltimore, Md.

June 1st, 1917.





MICHAEL J. NEARY

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HOME LONGINGS



Where the bright'ning hawthorne blossom,
Casts its perfume on the gale,
I, in fancy, ever wander,
In my homeland—Innisfail.
Ah! that fleeting, fickle fancy
Wraps my heart in endless woe;
I may never, never, never,
See the scenes of long ago.

Weary, weak, and sad, dejected,
Move I on life's prairie lone—
Wand'ring here, and cheerless, aimless—
“Here unknowing and unknown.”
And as look I thro' life's vista,
Sadness dulls my manhood's glow,
For this heart is still mid valleys
Where I wandered long ago.

Still the homeland rivers, glancing—
Shannon's bright, majestic stream,
Lee and Foyle, and Liffey, dancing,
People still mine ev'ry dream;
And the curlew's waking whistle,
And the sunset's dazzling glow,
Call me back to friends and woodlands—
Kindle thoughts of long ago.

Ah; but vain that witching longing—
Hopes deferred have hopeless grown;
Mem'ry's waking powers are wasted—
Like the banished bird, I'm flown
From homeland, and sadly, lonely,
Rome where fate doth guide me so,
Led by phantom meteors only
Back to scenes of long ago.

DREAMING



As wandering deeply musing through the fields,
I heard the sound of music down the street;
A voice was also singing soft and sweet,
A long-forgotten song—and 'round me steals
From out the mystic regions of the past
A voice like that I heard in long ago,
A joy that was too precious long to last
For one unworthy in this world of woe.

And I, a-weary of the long hot day,
And music's opium sealing up my brain,
Slumbered and dreamed; and still I heard again
That haunting voice like echoes far away
In some fair Isle, where joy and love abound,
Call from that peaceful haven unto me,
In accents sweet to share that holy ground;
And I awoke—to dull reality.



MY MOTHER'S LOVE



The heaven that lies about us in our infancy is
motherhood, and no matter how exalted or how de-
praved we may become we are always attended by
the grace of a mother's love.

My Mother—thou with more than human power
Did'st guide me in my childhood's sunny hour
And boyhood's bloom,
'Till I, from thee, and home, and friends did go
Unto the world—to drink the cup of woe,
Alas, too soon!

And I have drunk the cup e'en to despair,
But in my darkest hour I saw you there
 Beside the road
Where you did say good-by, to me, in tears.
That vision fair has helped me through the years
 To bear my load.
And through the lengthening years, in joy or care,
E'en to the gates of death, the portal fair
 Of Heaven above,
My heart shall bless and love the gentle power
Which guides my faltering steps, from natal hour—
 My Mother's love.



WAKE UP!



(To Mr. P. Devine.)

Why thus slumber when our country
 Seeks her children's loyal aid?
Why thus cease thy noble singing?
 Long, too long, thou hast delayed.
Wake thee up and pour thy numbers
 O'er the heaving, hungry foam,
They'll espouse the cause of Ireland,
 Liberty and right, and home.
Ill's the time to cease from battle
 When our freedom 'gins to shine,
Don't discard thy long-lov'd banner,
 Nor its folds to dust consign.
Stand thee up, where stood thee ever
 For the gem of ocean's foam;
Stand thee up for holy Ireland,
 Liberty and right and home.

CHRISTMAS NIGHT IN IRELAND



Picture Christmas night in Ireland; the old turf fire is crackling on the hearth, and around it the remnant of the family are gathered. Christmas candles are gleaming in every window, and over hill and vale the all-pervading peace, begotten of a simple and unquestioning resignation to the Divine Will presides. The bright-faced, rosy little children are gathered around the father and the mother. It is rosary time and oh! that Christmas rosary in Ireland. The Celtic imagination, veiled in the white robes of innate piety, follows the star that rests above the manger wherein the God Incarnate was born. There is a mysterious joy mingled with intense pathos in this Irish Christmas rosary. Far beyond the Atlantic's surging foam; away 'neath the twinkling of the "Southern Cross"; or there amidst the snow-capped peaks of the "Land of the Midnight Sun," lighted by the splendid hues of the aurora borealis; are scattered the brave sons and fair daughters of many an Irish mother this Christmas night. As that kindly, simple mother kneels to pray, it is no wonder that every maternal instinct is awakened. In fancy she can hear the responses of her "wandering boy" to the Hail Mary as it ascends to the Queen of Heaven, no matter in what land he may reside. And with the laughter of the gentle zephyr of the Christmas dawn, is borne to her ears, the accents of that beloved daughter whose footsteps have not echoed on the family threshold for many a year.

Scattered, oh Motherland, are thy brave sons and virtuous daughters, in every clime; driven forth from smiling plains and fields of golden grain whereon the cornucopia of Nature's lavish profusion seemed to bestow its choicest gifts. Lonely are the mothers of the "Old Land" for the children who are gone; longingly they await the return of their loved ones, but

often, very often, they wait in vain, and sink into the grave with this cherished hope of their lives unfulfilled. It is no wonder then that the elements of loneliness and pathos mingle with the Christmas spirit in Ireland.

Christmas The Feast of Children.

The universal celebration, the universal peace and joy of Christmas is certainly beautiful. The whole world seems to be drawn by unseen cords to one shrine of adoration; rich and poor, high and low, all acknowledge their equality at the common goal; they hear the angels sing, "Peace on Earth" and they send back in chorus the angel's song. In every Christian land people look forward to Christmas with the same feeling of peace, of joy, of simple unquestioning Faith.

Wherever it is possible the whole family gathers around the old hearth-stone on the Night of Nights. Sons and daughters, brothers and sisters journey back to where the mother awaits the coming of her loved ones, and what a joy it is for that mother to see her children around her, as of old. Where this meeting is impossible there is a meeting in recollection and in memory. The spirit of the absent ones meet around the Christmas table, and the mother's thoughts wander over land and sea, to greet the spirit of her children, for children they are to her, little children, altho' some may have grown to man's estate.

All are children on this feast of the Child-God. All are but little children in the goodness of heart as God would have them be. They are born again, as it were, of the spirit of peace—the spirit of Christmas, and like the golden time of Childhood, all look on the shining side of life, where but a few clouds of loneliness may enter, like the tears of Childhood. They have a night and a day, a period if you will of rejuvenation, so that the world over, Christmas is, indeed, the feast of Children.

HE BORE THE BATTLE-BRAND



He bore the battle-brand aloft ;
His courser pranced the tyrant o'er,
He saw in fancy's flame how oft
His father dashed 'gainst tyrant Corp,
But, ah! he fell for native land,
He drain'd his veins for native land,
And never 'gainst a tyrant Corp
Shall he his sabre draw once more.

The battle tide that swept the hill
And dyed in red the spreading plain,
He viewed with bold, determined will—
Nor thought, nor griev'd, nor felt a pain,
If father's blood had freely flowed,
If father's blood had valor showed,
Why think he of the battle pain,
If freedom's light be won again?

The dastard vile who fears to fall
For God, for home, for Freedom, too,
Is coward, base; for none or all
Can only please the bold, the true.
And thus was he, the bold, the fair,
As stood he in the battle there,
And cast his keen and war-like view
Along the lines where missiles flew.

The battle's o'er, the hero bold
Is wrapp'd amid the dreary gloom,
And valor's plume of glitt'ring gold
Now proudly guard his sacred tomb.
The virtues weep above his mold,
That honor'd, grand, immortal mold.
And now within his narrow room
He sleeps, and bright his glories bloom.

PLEASURE V. VIRTUE



Where varied scenes their beauty bright unroll
That, meteor-like, flash 'fore th' approving soul,
And glance, when past, on mem'ry's canvas spread—
A gleam that glows to tell of pleasures dead—
These, these, and more, betray the mocking dream
Of visions lone, or bright or sad they seem
As feelings tell and shape those misty spheres
Of thought that lie on source of joys or tears;
But him, oh, him! I pity oft whose gaze
Is fixed on scenes that lie thro' homeland ways—
And ways that lie o'er ocean's darkling foam—
Tho' rustic they, they bear the name of home.

And in that word that ever cheers the mind,
There's love, there's hope, with ev'ry joy combined;
We're blind unto its worth till, lonely, we
Its joys, now gone, in distance sadly see;
We then, by tears, unto those scenes are drawn
Where lapsed the light of childhood's fleeting dawn,
Where roses bloomed to perfume sweet exhale,
To grander make the rising hill, the dale—
Where once, unprized, I view'd, but failed to love
The scenes where now my weary feet would rove.

But clouds that dull Hope's lov'd and fleeting glow
Hang, threat'ning, high, and darkly spread below;
And I, who once midst past'ral beauty rov'd,
Have left those scenes that distance makes more lov'd,
And like the Israelite's lone, wailing scream,
When loud he wept by Babylon's ancient stream—
Mine, too, a pensive, sadden'd soul betrays
Now absent from but lives within the days

When virtue beamed like blushing, bashful bride,
Long ere it knew base passion's torrent tide
Where, flashing, gleam the arts that tempt and blind
Its eye to deeds that wretched make the mind.

The self-sought deeds that human ends belie
Invite to wreck—like serpent's beaming eye,
And we to passion's pow'rs are prone, and still
Pursue those charms that Conscience marks as ill;
Our Wisdom's least when Conscience wise extols
To eye the gulfs that yearn neglected souls,
To eye the abyss' yawning, circling cave—
The world's delight—destruction's certain grave—
The deep expanse that lures the shifting heart
And mars it then with Sin's envenomed art—
'Twere well and wise if we could always know
'Tis ours to shape or shun the soul's great foe.

Why mourn the happy scenes and days now past?
Why weep the hopes that days to deserts cast?
What are to me the days, the scenes, the joys
That circle grand the pleasing dreams of boys?
'Tis then and only then the feelings can
Enjoy a childish joy; too sadly sage is man
To weep o'er days long gone, and yet my theme
Would show and prove I prize the petty dream
That caters, fond and free, to hopes that prove
I still enjoy the thoughts of early love,
I still aspire to live again the yore—
But man is man, oft less, scarce ever more.

If long I thus for hopes and pleasures gone,
For hopes that thro' the darkling vistas shone,
It is because young innocence had glowed
Upon, around, and o'er that pleasing road

That led, because he wished, its tenant young
Thro' ways where "tempting grapes" in 'bundance
hung;

But soon a gloom came o'er those sun-lit ways,
And, yet, vain hope would have me sing their praise
For that, tho' virtue's star caught not mine eye,
'Twould blandly lure those weaklings such as I.

Salvation's ray, I know, full kindly lies
Upon the souls that timely realize
What reefs concealed in pleasure's blazing bloom
Lie there to lure the soul to lasting gloom;
And they who thus with fervid hearts intone
The Cause of ev'ry cause, the King, the Throne,
To grant His aid, who shall exclaim, pretend,
He shall not prove a Father and a Friend?
For let the doubting heart arise, believe,
And ask the soul's desire, it shall receive;
And he who thus aspires nor only feels
The peace that o'er him calmly, sweetly steals
Has this to know that grace he still attains
Tho' gloom be his; 'tis Wisdom's pow'r ordains
That he who thus the powers of Heaven maligned
Must be again by cleansing fires refined.

The joy we win, e'en on earth's lonely shore,
When long in doubt but won, 'tis prized the more,
And so 'twill be with hearts now 'live when dead
They'll sweetly prize the light that long had led
Their steps from wildly gay but sin-stained spheres—
The light that gave the gift of conscience's tears—
Blest are those hearts that prize their pleasure's foe
For cleansed are they in crucibles of woe,
For sing shall they in life's last gath'ring gloam
When burst on souls the light of Father's home.

It matters not if scenes thro' which we stray
Present a nightly gloom or noontide ray,
If there we best and to advantage can
But service show to God, ourselves and man,
And lesser make the hosts that pleasure prize
To dim, nay blind, the soul's beseeching eyes,
That she may thus mistake Salvation's road
Nor scan the Blood that high on Calv'ry flowed,
Yes, freely flowed, conjoined to boundless pain—
Our acts declare: "That flowing Blood is vain!"
Corrupt the life, illusive, too, the goal
Of those who scorn their Savior and their soul.

What are the castled crags that gleam in air?
The marble halls, with tracery flowing fair?
Or Tuscan piles? Ionic pillars grand?
Or Mosaic work? or endless miles of land?
The dreamer's dream, so falsely grand and vain,
That people still, and shall, the sinner's brain;
More lasting for one look of saving love
To gild our gloom and guard us for above—
When earthly dreams and days have from us fled
Dark seem the paths where passion blindly led.

Let Fate or Chance but lead us where she will—
The sun-kissed field, or dark recess of ill—
One hope shall guard our ev'ry sad decline—
And as the moon o'er turbid torrents shine,
So, too, this Hope shall gleam on pathways lone
Which, ere this gleam, had nought but terror shown—
This gleam is hope in God, in Mary, too;
The hope, earth's course for ever past, to view
The Source of love, of ev'ry grand design,
Our Mother, too, chaste, loving, lov'd benign;
And doubtly blest are they by ills inured
For saints, with joy, have martyrdom endured.

Then go, my soul, with courage, forward go!
Nor pine for earthly homes, nor fear their woe,
But feel and think that where-so'er you roam
'Tis thine to win an everlasting home,
'Tis thine to please, to serve and to obey
The Source who placed thee in thy home of clay,
'Tis thine to face for him earth's ev'ry ill
And pleasing bend thee to His gentle will—
Forego the rose nor fear life's thorny scars
And thou shalt yet be star above the stars!



LONGING



How often in the after years when time
Has touched us whitely with his frosty rime,
In silent moments never spoken of,
We long to know again a mother's love.

Bright gold, hard labor's guerdon, may be ours,
And fame have brought us satisfying dowers;
Yet in the moment when our life has all—
All would we give to hear her gently call.

When fevered with the fret of life and toil,
The strife of living, the day's turmoil,
How do we yearn, so deeply and so much,
To feel again the healing of her touch.

When bitter in defeat, by failure stung,
When from the heart, hot, careless words are flung,
How thought brings back, our dark moods to beguile,
The pleased, reproving laughter in her smile!

Ah, mothers, little do you know or guess
How in our secret hearts your name we bless;
How you are present through life's joys and tears,
Forgotten not through life's increasing years!

TO THE OLD MEN AND WOMEN OF MY
NATIVE VILLAGE



Warm greeting to you neighbors, friends,
Old folks, our village pride!
May joy and health which worth attends
Be yours to bless until life ends—
Glad hope your constant guide.

What joy 'twould be to meet you there;
How swift reflection flies
To merry youth and past hours fair,
Lost days, old friends shine strangely clear
Before my saddening eyes.

Again I tread the grassy dell,
Hear old tones lost awhile;
Old songs the evening echo swell,
Old faces that I loved so well
Lit with the same old smile.

Who trod the midnight hours away
Beside the spinning wheel?
Who tossed the shuttle till the day
Crep o'er the eastern hilltops grey,
Or turned the whirling reel?

Who cut the mighty bogs away
And wooed the stubborn soil
To yield such fields of upland clay
And smiling homes along the way,
Fit monitors of toil?

You and the master guiding hand
Of Him who rules above,
Gave us those hills and valleys grand—
Gave us this pleasant, happy land—
The village that we love.

You often think, as girl or boy,
 Watched o'er by parent love;
You dreamed of life made up of joy,
Of golden truth without alloy,
 Of hope laid up above.

Perhaps some moonlit scene comes back
 When somewhat older grown,
You dreaming trod some fairy track
With one you loved, but now, alack!
 Long, long left here alone.

Or graver still the pictures grow—
 A touch with grief and pain,
As children dear to manhood grow;
Then o'er the wild blue ocean go,
 While tear drops fall like rain.

God bless you lads and lassies grey,
 Long may you linger here,
Long, long we wish your gentle sway
With sunshine strewn along your way,
 Your pathway bright and clear.

Upon Time's shifting, threshing floor
 God winnows out the grace
Of human life, and ever more
From earth He garners to His store
 The best of this frail race.

And, soon, in just a little while,
 From past the shimmering stars
He'll call you upwards with His smile—
Call you from this world of guile
 Beyond the sunset bars.

HOME LONGING



Oh! let me breathe mine Irish air,
And let me walk an Irish glen;
And let me see mine Irish sky,
And view her streams and hills again;
And let me walk the shady lane
Where song-birds pipe their vesper lay,
Ah, let mine anxious eyes behold
Mine Ireland, dear, far, far away!

'Twere blest to breathe the air that's filled
With soft appeals to heaven's King.
The Rosary's tone in cadence grand
And church-bells sweet there softly ring;
What feelings sad steal o'er the hearts
That now from thee, lov'd land, must roam
When from thee far in distant fields
Their thoughts are thine, lov'd Irish home.

E'en if the peasant's humble home
Of blazing wealth or show be void.
There's something in its native calm
That stranger hearths can ne'er provide;
There's something there that foreign lands
Can neither boast nor rightly claim—
The heritage of countless years—
Unwav'ring faith and sense of shame.

God's blessing on that gen'rous land,
That land so crushed and bleeding still,
That land so pure whose cup of woe
No effort bold doth seem to spill;
God's blessing on that dear old Isle—
Kissed by the ocean's trembling waves,
God bless that land, that suff'ring land,
That hallowed land of martyrs' graves.

HAPPINESS



The sun in all its noon-day power, its grandeur and its
beams

Had shed its glist'ning rays afar by castle, hills, and
streams.

A floral arch had cast its shade upon a pathway
fair,

But yet amid that tranquil scene a something was
not there—

Sweet happiness privation's balm; the foe of ev'ry
care.

I paced me 'neath that flow'ry arch unknowing and
unknown,

In quest of ease from worldly toil, nor did I stray
alone;

For, oh! what motely throngs had mov'd that bright
and flow'ry way,

Yet not a heart within that throng could boldly, surely
say,

And think of past and future years, "My thoughts are
glad and gay."

The lover paced that walk beside a maiden young and
fair,

But was deception in his heart? Was honor stationed
there?

The merchant passed with ancient beard, and stroked
his silv'ry head

And plann'd how he existence should to fortune
meanly wed,

And toilers rob tho' weeping babes should shed their
tears for bread.

And thus it is in every walk, no matter where we
 roam,
No happiness we ever find; for earth is not her
 home.
No mortal heart can peace attain, nor eye its beauty
 view,
Tho' fancy fire our hearts with hope, a phantom we
 pursue,
That light's unknown, unfelt, unseen, save 'yond the
 bending blue.



ST. PATRICK'S DAY, 1915

(Sincerely addressed to an Irish patriot and poet,
Mr. H. Frain, Passaic, N. J.)



Next to the God that gave thee soul
 You love the distant Em'rald Isle,
O'erspread with dew that glist'ning gleam,
 Where lovely scenes in beauty smile,
Your pulsing heart, your Irish heart,
 Is still as 'twas in days long o'er,
4 The Fenian fire made hot its blood
 Beside your old, lov'd Rooskey Shore.

Say could that blood that fired you then
 With manhood's thoughts and vigor's glow,
Now in its lesser power despise
 Its love of land of long ago?
As well, as vain, as useless, too,
 To blend the night with noontide ray;
And, hence, it is I pray my God
 To ever guard and guide thy way.

WE MEET TO PART



We meet to part, perhaps 'tis fate's decree
That moulds our lives and carves the way we go;
Though sad it seems, it may be better so.
You are so fair, so beautiful to see,
'Twere my presumption e'en to think of thee,
Our ways diverge from here, farewell, for lo!
My path lies where the thorns of duty grow,
While love and hope remain behind with thee.
'Tis but a little while since first we met,
Yet in that I've lived a lifetime o'er—
I've lived and loved, and now my soul will fret
For one whose form my eyes shall see no more.
Sad fate! but it was ever so, and yet
Men love and lose, and live to lose once more.



THE IRISH FATHER



My colleen dhas, my colleen,
You're sailing far from me,
Like the wild geese you're flying
Beyond the wide, blue sea;
My colleen dhas, my colleen,
I'll never see you more,
God bless you and preserve you
On the stranger's shore.

My colleen dhas, my colleen,
I see you as of yore,
With your golden curls entwined
My ould gray Cothamore.
When she, who had your eyes of blue,
Would sing her happy song;
God bless her and preserve her,
I won't be from her long.

My colleen dhas, my colleen,
I see you as a bride,
In the far-off land so happy
With him, your love and pride.
I'll bless you both, mavourneen,
As I whisper, God knows best,
I'll miss you in my lonely years
But here I wish to rest.

It's here she is now sleeping,
She'd bid me with her stay,
The youthful bride who left you
When she was called away,
She wants me here beside her grave
To tell her of your joys,
My colleen dhas, God bless you
Till we meet in Paradise.



A WISH



What thoughts of our kindred, what longings for
home,

Our courses encircle wherever we roam;
Tho' trappings of pleasure their beauty exhale,
Tho' wander we over Contentment's glad vale,
Tho' ways of the stranger be cheering and gay,
There's something still absent and keepeth away,
That cast a sweet sunshine on life's early day.

Tho' but a lone sheeting encircled by plains,
And standing 'midst shadows of long-rifled fanes,
Tho' dark, lonely ruins some pleasure had pour'd

Those dark, lonely ruins some pleasure had pour'd
By thoughts of the martyrs who died for the Lord.
And thus the soul living amid scenes like those
Is ever a hero 'gainst the soul's seething foes
For truth is within it and there brightly glows.
Then blame not this longing, this wishing for home,
For this is the feeling of exiles who roam.
Deny them that longing, destroy that lov'd care,
And life is a terror—"the woodland of Weir."
Wherever I wander, o'er mountain or foam—
Neath temples Ionic, huge arches, or dome—
Let th' eve of existence behold me at home.



TO MOTHER



Tho' I should wish how vain the hope
To cast oblivion o'er thy name;
Tho' I should wish thee to forget
That ever sets my soul aflame;
Then how it is that I could part
From links of love you round me wove,
'Thout feeling first the pangs of pain
'Thout wailing thee my heart's one love?

E'en tho' the bright, attractive glare
Of wealth should give its tinsel show;
Tho' mine were sov'reign power that gives
Man pow'r to rule o'er man below;
Yet nought could change the true esteem
I bear unto my heart's one love;
Blest were those hours beneath your care—
When I, mid bliss, did gaily rove.

GALWAY



'Tis more than ten long years ago I bid a fond adieu
To those now smoldering in decay and, brother mine,
to you;

Though things looked bright beyond the main when
I left old Dublin bay,

I now long to be home again with you in sweet
Galway.

In fancy now I often stray through woods and val-
leys rare.

Just as I did in days gone by when I was free from
care;

And when my daily toil is o'er each night I kneel and
pray

For those fond souls I'll see no more at home in
sweet Galway.

Though living in a beauteous land most prosperous
and free,

With golden mines and mountains rare in smiling
harmony;

I pray God may it be my lot to travel back some day
To scenes I love and can't forget at home in sweet
Galway.

There is no one where I was born would recog-
nize my face;

Yet still I hope that some bright morn I'll see that
lovely place.

The friends I loved in early youth are long since
passed away,

But I will pray above their graves at home in sweet
Galway.

PATRIOTS OF "EASTER WEEK," 1916



E'en tho' they sleep, what thousands wake
To glory in and prize their name;
That deathless scene, that glorious fight,
Is now a sweeping, ceaseless flame!
Our hearts with fiery feelings burn—
We love the cannon's crackling boom,
See Erin grasp her stainless flag,
As weeps she o'er the patriot's tomb!

A twelve-month gone! But "Easter Week"
Seems tho' as 'twere but yesterday,
The same proud, stern, unflinching wish
To share in freedom's sacred fray;
We stand where Pierce and Plunkett stood—
Behind the patriot's glist'ning steel;
If Freedom's lost then Death shall give
A light the slave can never feel.



LOUGH KEY (Boyle, Co. Ros.)



Sweet they scen'ry grand, entrancing
'Neath the ev'ning's sunny beam,
For here dwells fair, matchless beauty,
Here the wavelets glancing gleam.

CHORUS

Oh! how strong my warm affection
For the scenes that here I see,
Here I hear fond nature saying:
'Tis it is Lough Key, Lough Key!

Grand thy wavelets quickly bounding
To thy charming, pebbly shore;
See I here the twitt'ring swallow
Skim thy shining surface o'er.

Islands fair and woodlands wavy
Mirror'd in thy waters fair
Islands grand; and how romantic—
Ruin'd castles wasting there.

Grand, indeed, thy waters sparkling
'Neath the wan and silent moon,
Woods are pictur'd on thy surface;
Streamlets to thee flow and croon.

Would that earthly power, all fleeting,
Would ambitious wish consign,
Here I'd live amid thy beauty—
Here I'd songs around thee twine.

Oh! how strong my warm affection
For the scenes that here I see,
Here I hear fond Nature saying—
'Tis, it is Lough Key, Lough Key.



A GAELIC ADMONITION



Watch the proud and bloated tyrant
Minion of our Erin's woe—
Greedy Saxon, fire and plunder—
Erin's base and ruthless foe.
Hate him, shun him, now as ever—
Surely while his wrecks remain;
Many a smokeless, roofless homestead
Loudly tell our country' pain.

Shall forgotten be the mis'ry,
Shall forgotten be the years,
Yes, wherein he darkly bound us,
Adding tears to countless tears?
Shall forgotten be the robbers—
Foes who even hacked the slain?
Not 'till glows the sun of freedom,
Not 'till peopled is the plane.

Not 'till fades away the winter
Of our nation's sadd'ning gloom;
Not 'till 'gain our ancient glory
Shall our throneless queen illume;
Not 'till ev'ry gray-ruin'd abbey
Feels again the abbots head
Not 'till 'gain the might of vengeance
Restitutes our honor'd dead.

Not 'till sounds again our language
On the tongue of ev'ry Gael,
Floating freshly, wildly, sweetly,
Over ev'ry glen and dale.
Not 'till come the exiles, weary,
Proudly o'er the seething foam,
Here to die where fell their fathers
Fighting for our faith and home.

Not 'till Ulster, gallant Ulster!
Erin's destitution feels;
Ulster! home of great O'Donnells,
Ulster! home of great O'Neils.
Ulster! Ulster! Oh! what mem'ries,
Rise above each northern crest,
Once the Rome of all our country—
Now an ulcer on her breast.

Ah! but yet within old Ulster,
On her hills and valleys fair,
Find we still bold, true McCrackens,
And O'Donnells yet are there.
There is yet that ardent spirit
Erin's long-lost rights to gain;
True as 'twas on that June ev'ning
On historic Benburb plain.

Gather, gather, proudly gather,
Not like Saxons base to pain,
But your throneless, helpless country
From a tyrant's greed to gain.
Win you back your ancient glory,
Win you back your freedom's flame;
Better far to die as heroes
Than to live in cow'rdly shame!



A MAY CAROL



Hail! Mother, lov'd Mother, of virgins the fairest,
Thou Flow'r of lov'd Israel; thou Flow'r among
thorns;
Hail! Rose of sweet Sharon a rose-bud the rarest,
Whose beaut'ous bright hue our exile adorns.

Hail! morning's lov'd Light, Mother and Maiden,
Of mortals the One and the lov'd, fadeless May,
The one only pow'r to restore our lost Aiden;
The glory that never shall taste of decay.

Hail! Mary, the purest, the one spotless treasure
That mankind can offer to Jesus on high;
Thou Star of the Heavens, their beauty, their pleasure,
The loving and lov'd of the lands 'yond the sky.

As flow'rets we cull in the deep, grassy wildwood,
Bright beaming like thee, to strew on thy shrine,
The devotion that swayed and delighted our childhood
Is ours once again for Thee and for Thine.

As we gaze on the flow'rs we cannot but ponder
How Thee and thy Jesus in the long, long ago,
'Mid Sharon's bright flow'rs and fairest, didst
wander
Tho' glad you still felt the future's dark woe.

O Mary! look down on those in deep sadness,
Smooth the paths of the sad, the weary, the lone,
And grant to their hearts the sunshine of gladness,
For thou, like to them, hath sadness long known.

Look down on those hearts where life's gloom and
sorrow
Mar the hopes and the charms their childhood
once wove,
Sad hearts, but unwary who view'd not the morrow,
And blindly thus trusted to earthly-made love.

Look down on young hearts who seek but the
pleasure
That lures but to gloom in pleasure's gay train.
Remember their dreams shall reap a sad measure—
The days and the nights of dark, breathing pain.

'Neath thy mantle of sweet love let's live and let's
never
Feel but thy love that knows not decay;
Our warm affections, bright, blooming forever,
Are beaming for Thee, lov'd Queen of the May.

IRELAND STILL



Along the Susquehannah's side,
The Rappahannock's em'rald shore,
And by Petapsko's sandy beach,
And grand Potomac—glist'ning o'er—
I've wander'd oft and long, but still,
I prize the dear old Shannon more.

I've gazed with Irish pride upon
Great Gettysburg's immortal plain,
And scann'd where Meagher's dashing men
Faced Mary's Heights beneath the rain
Of grape and shot and war's red fire—
But they shall never fight again.

And Chesapeake's immortal bay—
The Salamis of western spheres—
I've ridden o'er and saw the flag
That England feared, that England fears.
Still, still I long for Irish glens—
The cause, the cure, of troubled tears.

And Jersey's rock-bound coast I've paced,
And sped o'er Narraganset Bay,
And walk'd the Brooklyn battle-fields,
Scanned Delaware's grand, trembling spray,
The more I see the dearer seem
Mine Irish streams far, far away.

Say when shall cease this exiled band
To foreign fields in sadness roam?
Say when shall those true Celtic sons
Speed o'er the deep and glist'ning foam?
Oh! shall this Irish heart e'er beat
Among the friends it loves at home?

WE CAN'T FORGET



We can't forget, we'll ne'er forget
The glaring wrongs that Ireland bore;
We can't forget the poisoned cup,
The gallows high, the glaive, the sword;
We can't forget the dungeon's doom,
Nor cease to scan the church's blaze,
The murder'd priest's unburied bones
That bleach'd along the mountain ways.

We can't forget old Lim'rick's walls;
Nor hide the bridge of dear Athlone;
Nor cease to see the bloody fields
That lie far north of green Tyrone.
As long as glows the burning sun,
As long as roll Atlantic waves,
So long shall we detest the power
That filled our land with gory graves.

Then blame me not if dream I on
The haunts that wake a former joy,
But different now seem times and thoughts
From those I knew when yet a boy;
No dewy eves, no suns, no moons,
No song nor perfum'd-laden'd gale,
Like those I yet unlearn'd to prize
In days that knew no woe nor wail.

But mem'ry dear, disturb not now
The little calm my manhood knows;
'Twill never dull misfortune's thorn
To weep o'er childhood's faded rose;
Still, still my mem'ry's fever'd dream
Will in the dews of childhood lave;
I live within and prize the past
And shall 'till sunk in Time's great wave.

IT WAS CHRISTMAS EVE AGAIN



It was eleven o'clock at night, yet lights were glimmering from the windows of every home, scattered throughout the valley. The road leading to the church was dotted with people. Surely something unusual must be going on to keep the inhabitants of this quiet, old-fashioned village awake so late. Yes, it is Christmas Eve, and the people are going to midnight mass.

The old people jogged along gravely and devoutly, the young in groups, laughing and talking high-spiritedly, but all were conscious of the solemnity of the occasion.

Walking quietly along was an old, grey-haired woman, with a handsome dignified youth by her side—the widow's only son. They walked along in silence for a time. "What is the matter mother?" at length asked the young man. "Nothing dear, I am only meditating." The boy looked earnestly at his mother for he thought he heard a half smothered sob in her voice. "I hope you are not unhappy because I am going away so soon," he said. "It is necessary and we can't help it; and then I will make a home for you over there in the great 'west land'." "John! John!" sobbed the poor old woman entirely overcome, "I did not think that you would be ever forced to emigrate and leave me here alone in my old age; yet I am not the only mother who is lonesome this Christmas night, for many a son and daughter of the long-suffering, misruled country are scattered 'neath the cruel hand of tyranny, but God's will be done!"

The tears rolled down the cheeks of the generous-hearted boy, and there beneath the shade of the old church, in the solemn midnight hour, he promised his mother that he would make a home for her in that great country to which he was going, a home where no oppressive law would ever enter to mar the peace of her old age.

Just one week later—a cold frosty morning in January, as the train is pulling out from the station, carrying away the “light of her old age” you could hear the mother calling wildly to her son, “For God’s sake, John, don’t forget your old mother, or don’t forget the religion of your fathers in the land to which you are going.” She then walked home over the four miles of rough country road—her heart crushed and bleeding.

It was six years later, Christmas Eve again. We meet John for the second time, but oh, what a change! He shall not hear the Christmas Mass tonight, no, he is standing in the dock of a Chicago court listening to a disgraceful charge being brought against him. He is no longer the handsome high-spirited youth of six years ago. As he takes his seat, he appears so lonely and dejected, a murmur of sympathy passes round the court-room.

The judge directs the jurymen. The noise of their retreating footsteps does not arouse the youth. He sits there alone with his head bowed, careless it seems. As the jurymen file back to their places, they look, with a world of pity in their eyes, at the unhappy young man before them. As the word “guilty” is pronounced they turn away their heads, but he heeds them not. He sits as in a stupor. “Prisoner at the bar, have you anything to say why sentence of the court should not be passed upon you?” These words seemed to electrify him. He jumps to his feet. The fire flashes in his eyes and the old smile is on his lips. He holds that once proud head erect, and looks around the courtroom. Tears welled to his big blue eyes, and he bravely tries to fight them back as he replies, “I have only this to say, your Honor. It is the old story—a victim of circumstances. I was in this country a few years and had bad luck. I tried to pull myself together, time and time again for—well—for the sake of someone ’way back home. Disap-

pointment and loneliness got the best of me, and I turned to drink, but of this crime, God knows I am innocent. I had been drinking the night the robbery was committed. The thief knew my condition and put those things in my pockets so that I would be suspected. I had no friends or money. Circumstances were all against me, and I am found guilty. My life, I hope will serve as a warning to other young lads. Away back in Ireland an old grey-haired mother watches and prays for me this blessed Christmas night. I think I see her now as I saw her six years ago, when we walked to midnight mass together." He sat down overcome with emotion.

"Ten years," said the judge, "I could have given you a life term, but I want you to go back again to those you love and begin life over again."

"She will never need me then. Poor old mother!" gasped the unhappy culprit as he was led away to his lonely cell.

HE IS RISEN!



He is risen! He is risen! Rent the darkness of the
tomb,
Sin, and death, and sheol are conquered; light is
quiv'ring thro' the gloom,
Well may hymns seraphic greet Him; well may sa-
cred banners wave—
For our souls behold a vision of a world beyond the
grave!

He is risen! He is risen, who was humbly proud to
own
E'en a stable for a palace, and a manger for a throne!
How He took the reed for sceptre; how He bore the
thorny crown,
How the Virgin's offspring holy on our earthly pride
looked down!

He is risen! He is risen! See the tomb—He is not
here—
What a grand and heavenly knowledge; doubt dis-
pelling; crushing fear!
Sweet hosannas to the Savior; welcome, welcome
from the dead—
How the earth with gladness trembles,—for the
grave's untenanted!

He is risen! He is risen! Roman guards stand
speechless by;
For they see an act mysterious, thoughts of which can
never die.
Lonely death, man's darkened emblem, doth the
Savior's glory tell;
Sin is conquered; heaven rejoices; human hopes,
broad heaving, swell!

He is risen! He is risen! Angels greet the golden
morn;
E'en unthankful man rejoices—Redemption's for him
born.
Welcome to Thee, Risen Jesus! healer of the blind
and lame,
Gladly shall they live for ever who but b'lieveth in
Thy Name



THE EPIPHANY GRADUATE'S FAREWELL
(1916)



Farewell to scenes where we for years
Have lived, and shall in spirit rove,
Where brightest hopes and kindest hearts
As strangers met but lived in love.

The days of filial friendship fond
In sadness now are gone and o'er,
And those who long in friendship's grasp
Have lived, mayhap, shall meet no more.

Epiphany! our Mater, dear.
What tears for thee now rolling flow,
As mem'ry brings the past to view—
The happy days of long ago!

The thoughts we here have garnered from
God's holy priests are lights to guard,
Are meteor shafts on life's dark paths,
That guide us to the Savior Lord.

Epiphany! We leave thy halls,
So long our happy, happy home;
With bursting hearts and tearfilled eyes,
We look upon thy tow'ring dome.

We look upon thy vernal heights ;
Thy streamlets rush and mellow flow ;
Thy vistas long ; thy flow'ry groves,
The happy haunts of long ago.

O, Mem'ry now why swell the heart
With visions bright of former joy ?
Why thus with faded, dear delight
Young, parting, gen'rous hearts annoy ?

May He thy portals guard and bless
Who future, past, and present sees ;
And may thy sons live, labor, die,
Thy wishes blest and hopes to please.



AN EXILE'S YEARNING



There's no rapture in this evening for an exile far
from home ;
The birds' sweet songs are silenced, or bear a plain-
tive tone ;
The wood thrush's song is throbbin' in a solemn dirge-
like moan,
And the blackbird and the robin answer in an under-
tone.
Over to me from the woodland not a smilin' echo
floats ;
All the little birds are lonesome, they forget their
happy notes.
There's not a tender plainin' where the little streams
are young ;
The birds and brooks are talkin' in a foreign un-
known tongue.
The clear-voiced thrushes tremble as they chant their
evenin' hymn ;
The gold upon the finches is tarnished-like and dim
The lilac buds are open, but I cannot bear the sight,
So faded and so droopin' every blossom seems tonight,

There's not a sweet white lily but is shadowed as it
 swings;
There's no glory in the meadows all the sunshine's
 taken wings;
There's no music in the mornin', there's no flower
 but gives me pain,
All the sweetness has departed and will never come
 again.
There's a heavy shadow hangin' over earth and over
 sea,
And I'm homesick for the country where the sun
 shines full and free
I'm homesick for sweet Galway where I lived for
 many years.
'Ere hope was crossed or pleasure dimmed by sorrow
 and by tears.



THE PRIEST



Out of the Mystic Silence
 He heard the whispered "Come"
But siren voices called him;
 Pleadings of friends and home;
Life with its gaudy trappings;
 Glamour of wordly lure,
Bright to the eyes first seeming—
 Or else, to serve the poor?

But to the sweet temptation
 He steeled his pure young heart,
For him nor home nor kindred,
 His was a life apart,
His on the lonely hilltops
 With Christ, the Lord, to stand,
Leading by his example
 Up to the Better Land.

What of the years of waiting?
How did he work and pray?
Fearing yet how desiring,
The Ordination Day.
"Thou art a priest forever,"
Thrills through his inmost soul,
Treading with holy fervor
Way to the final goal.

Perfect the preparation
Of him who trembling stands,
Robed in the sacred vestment,
Touching with holy hands
Chalice of man's atonement
Fruit of the Pierced Side,
Signed with the blest anointing,
Priest of the Crucified.

There with the August sunshine
Tinting his robes of gold.
Standeth the new made pastor,
Shepherd within the fold.
He is a Priest forever,
One of the chosen few,
Kneeling there for his blessing,
A mother's dream comes true.
—Selected



SPRING



Herald of the summertime,
When with rapture and with rhyme
Swell the throats of songsters gay
Through the vales the live long day;
When each bough and bole and blade
In the upland in the glade,

Bursts with ecstasy to gaze
On His works and mutely praise
With eloquence—to Him
More than from dissembling men;
While the quick streams as they pass,
To the baby blades of grass
Babble words of joy and love
Caught from out the realms above,
And our hearts are filled with cheer
As we gaze upon the clear
Rippling waters glide away,
And we think we hear them say,
“Love and hope and joy we bring,”
’Tis the message of the Spring.



XMAS NIGHT IN IRELAND



Ah! tis Xmas Night in the dear old land,
’Tis Xmas Night in my dear, old home,
But far, far away from the scenes of my youth
I wander tonight, yet in fancy I roam
To scenes that I love away o’er the foam.

I see the old hearth where often I mused
In days that defied the wander’rs care,
I see that, besides its embers so bright,
My mother is weeping departed ones there—
Heav’n bless her dear soul, my tear-worded prayer.

The father I lov’d, the pride of my life,
Shall be missed tonight; for vacant’s his chair,
Here hearts seen in joy, but, ah, my sad bloom,
My thoughts are afar in Ireland so fair—
God grant me the day to wander o’er there.

Heav'n shield that dear country from all that is vile,
And shield her dear children, the bold and the
brave,
And grant this heart yet, at evening's mild close,
Shall proudly surmount each dark, heaving
wave,
To seek me in Erin the gloom of the grave.

* *

HOPE

*

(To a Friend)

You may ramble and rove where fancy may guide
thee
O'er the wild, beetling cliffs or moon-lighted foam,
Or 'mid the wild regions where nomads may chide
thee,
Or loiter, in ease, 'mid the pleasures of home;
You may saunter the green-crested valley or moun-
tain,
Or wander by Tigris, or the grand, classic Nile,
Or rove in the twilight beside a clear fountain
Where mem'ries revive your boyhood's lov'd smile.

Or lonely with sorrow and deep, bitter sadness,
The valley's recess may give thee a gleam,
Tho' faint be its lustre, of a long-parted gladness
That kindled the soul of life's early dream;
But wherever thy path is; in city, on sea,
'Mid valleys all green 'neath the sky's spreading
blue,
One bright, happy thought beam ever for thee—
That thou art thy God's and lov'd by Him, too.

ST. PATRICK'S DAY



When tyrant hordes of banded might
Had plunged the Gael in darkest night,
In prisons dark, in slav'ry's throe,
In tears that told of ceaseless woe,
And made his life a living tomb,
With scarce a ray to light the gloom,
They scarce conceived their iron sway
But greater made St. Patrick's Day.

The foe had swept the Gael afar,
Nor deem'd he sent a guiding star
To spread the light of faith and love—
With what success? Let progress prove—
A progress built on love alone—
The reflex of the Savior's throne—
The faith that guides the narrow way,
The God that gives us Patrick's Day .

The Switzer's hills; Italia's glens;
E'en Albion's homes—and Holland fens,
Iona's homeless, trackless loam;
Our Western land; Canadian home,
The southern Cross; the Ganges grand;
And sunny France; and Afric's land,
Rejoice, forsooth, as well they may,
In praise of God on Patrick's Day.

And those of Ireland's em'rald sod
Have, doubtless, cause to love their God;
For they, what e'er their woes beside,
Have cause to feel a pulsing pride;
When sin had swept full many a strand
Old Ireland rose a Promised Land
To bring the Word o'er lands away —
The word that gives us Patrick's Day.

SOLILOQUY



The wind that blows so carelessly across life's
stormy plain
To some brings joy and happiness, to others grief
and pain;
To some it comes like music's voice borne on the
midnight still,
But gentle breeze and storm alike to me are bleak
and chill.

And zephyr thro' declining years while sweeping o'er
the sea,
To some bring barques with shining sails but
shattered wrecks to me,
And when I heard the music that would cheer me
on my way
The storm came on like 'venging sprite and blew it
all away.

Oh, why should it pursue me still into my secret
bowers,
And with its blighting breath destroy the rosy-tinted
flowers.
Oh hope, which I had planted deep in heart's con-
genial clay,
And before they bore the fruit I wished to sink in
dull decay?

Why did it with malignant joy blow furiously around
The garden of my life, and with my hopes bestrew
the ground?
But when my spirit, weary, sad, shall breathe the
final sigh
Perhaps 'twill sweetly sing above the cold grave
where I lie.

OH! HOW THE YEARS



Oh! how the years advance and still
Are we to worth the more inclined?
Does honor's grand, effulgent glow
Light up, or round, or guard the mind,
As once she did in days behind?

But let me ask why moralize
In every wish or every aim?
But what's a life if shame's its plan?
What fate awaits on mortal fame?
His fate who lists to syren dame.

Look thou along the beaten path
Where blindens' hearts have gone before
View men and paths, results and hearts—
See "self" blazed on the pennants o'er?
See how they lift "Excelsior."

How void is man of all that's blest
If he should scoff his fellow man,
Nor try to cheer those sadden'd souls
Entrapped within misfortune's ban—
That awful, huge, and luckless van.

If look we o'er life's broad'ning fields
What sadness o'er the prospect glooms,
And all or nigh by self imposed—
Deception base there blazing looms—
Sad hearts, hot tears, untimely tombs.

The son with evil glancing eye
Is found to slay his parents old,
And man is ready still to send
His fellow to the grave full cold
For jealous love, for fame, for gold.

Let's live but not for crafty gain;
Let's fight but not for vacant fame;
Let's rise but not on human wrecks;
Let's love the good and hate the shame,
Let's try to praise, not always blame.



ERECT! MY SOUL



Erect! my soul, salvation's beam—
High Heaven's love—is round you thrown
'Tis vain, nay fond, to think or seem,
That you, my soul, can live alone;
But mercy's balm and faith divine,
And ceaseless hope, life's ling'ring ray,
Can gild the gloom of men's decline,
Can ope for souls Eternal Day.

Go forth my soul, and burst the snares,
That lie beneath each luring glow,
Nor fall beneath dark passion's cares,—
Learn thou 'tween good and ill to know,
Nor fear the long and starless deep
Of sorrows lone, or dungeon's doom;
Nor fear existence's final leap
Into the grave's gaunt, gath'ring gloom.

Nor fear the earth's hoarse breathing gales.
Her awful reefs, her billowy foam,
Her broken masts, her shatter'd sails—
All lead unto a glorious home.
What tho, our life's a ling'ring way,
Thro' living tombs of darkness drawn,
'Tis night before Eternal Day,
Our years presage the breaking dawn.

Then go! my soul, with courage, go!
And raise thee o'er earth's sordid gain;
Nor brook delay; nor bend to foe
Nor pleasure court nor hug life's chain;
Nor be the pleasure's weakling base
Nor glitt'ring dupe in fashion's train,
But measure time and fashion place
To train thee as thine Author's gain.



IN MEMORIAM



(Written on receiving a blade of grass which grew
on my father's grave—year 1914.)



'Tis but a blade of grass that grew
From out the soil where father's laid,
Unmoistened now by Irish dew—
What thoughts arise! I scan the shade
Where all my best of temporal things
Rests 'neath where choral songsters sings.

O lonely grave 'neath skies of blue!
Would I could shed my teardrops where
I'd mutely sigh my woes to you,
And weep the form that slumbers there;
Ah, sighing thus but pains the soul,
And vainly must the teardrops roll.

Still, still I prize this faded blade—
It sprung from consecrated clay,
Nurs'd by a form that Justice made
The guardian of his life-long day.
(May I in ways e'er live as he
From servile ways, dishonor, free.)

E'en tho' this blade of grass doth now,
Present to me a blighted bloom,
It tells of pow'r to whom we bow,
Who guards the altar, cot, and tomb,
Who'll raise my father's form to life
Triumphant over temporal strife.

Say, why it is the human heart,
E'en tho' it gloats on pleasure's glow,
Is ready still 'mid joys to part
To scenes where friends are mould'ring low ;
Nor shall it cease to love the dead ;
Nor cheer'd 'twill be, nor comforted ?

It is because the ties of love
Can live from earth, to grave, to heav'n ;
Nor wealth nor pow'r that law disprove—
'Twill never die, 'twas never riv'n.
Yes, thus 'twill be and thus with me,
And shall till soul from earth is free.

Ah ! fading blade, lov'd, fading blade,
I look on thee with moisten'd eye !
How sad, how sad, I'll ne'er be laid
Where grew you 'neath an Irish sky !
Where all my best of temporal things
Rests 'neath where choral songster sings.



'MID THE FLOWERS



'Mid the flow'rets let me wander
Where the sparkling dewdrops shine,
Covering o'er the works of nature—
Would that scene were ever mine ;

Let it float adown my mem'ory
And, in fancy, 'fore my gaze
Shine in glorious, dazzling splendor
Picture of my childhood days.

Oh, my childhood, wasted childhood,
Glimmers still in fancy's bloom;
But its pleasure and its gladness
Now have sunk 'neath manhood gloom;
But the sight of hanging roses
Weeping with the dews of dawn,
Brings me back, in fancy, pleasure
That old Time has long withdrawn.

But how diff'rent grow our feelings
As we count the steps of time;
Love and youth march on together
Like the measur'd flow of rhyme.
Later years, tho' often glorious,
Never know life's early love,
Age and selfish thoughts, so greedy,
Hand in hand then onward move.

Ah! how little reck we pleasures
To our childhood only known,
Never can we feel their glory
'Till our manhood's sorrow's shown;
Ah! 'tis then we feel the mis'ry
Win we from our manhood's woe;
Never yet did days of manhood
Proffer man his boyhood's glow.

THE HEART



Thou source from which the thoughts of pleasure
spring;

The source that plans our ev'ry human woe,
Thou heart how oft you fond affection sting

And leaves that friendship which we love full low;
Because you heave, too oft, in thoughts profane

In thoughts that mar sweet virtue's lovely sheen;
And prompt the act that spells our honor's bane

And court you will the vile, the pleasing scene.

Tho' gloom and woe may oft thee surround—

E'en tho' that you must the pangs of woe endure,
If true, in honor's garb you're ever found—

Tho' he who owns thee now be lone and poor.

Then doubly blest be they who ever strive

To shield their hearts from sin's corroding gloom;
'Mid hopes and pray'rs these hearts shall ever thrive

And doubly so in lands beyond the tomb.



HALLS V. COTTAGES



——“And certes on virtue's Heav'nly road
The cottage leaves the palace far behind.”

—Burns.



Within the halls that gilt display

There may appear a glimmer grand,
Ordain'd by wealth's attractive pow'r

And polish'd by the painter's hand;
But conjur'd yet, indeed, may be

A moral foe within those walls—

Corrupted blood and infamy

Full oft disgrace those tow'ring halls.

Deceptive souls and stony hearts
There sap the blood of hapless slaves;
There gloat on worth and waste the lives
Of those who long for early graves.
And those who feast on hard-won wealth—
Ne'er deem their slaves' corroding fears,
Nor think the homes that give this wealth
Are sunk in woe and fraught in tears.

Yon dreary waste where hardship reigns
And want doth mar each household there,
Must give, from out a barren soil,
The wealth to pamper pride and glare.
Oh! regal pomp-extending pow'r—
Where purple festoons proudly wave,
Say must thou find thy impious source
Upon the weak and mangled slave?

Come! trampled Justice, stand you up,
Assert the pow'r your name ordains,
Nor scuttled be by tyrants base
Who'd gag you in oblivion's chains!
Go forth and teach the humble slave
To stand him up for manhood's right!
Go forth and show the tyrant foe
That Justice now shall vanquish Might!

View thou a tyrant's lordly hall—
Huge Gothic windows glimmer there,
A Moorish archway 'yond I see,
And here's a Doric pillar, fair;
And many a noble buttress great,
Verandahs sweet—haunts of repose,
And alcoves grand of fretwork fine—
All, all the pow'r of wealth disclose.

Here Tuscan capitals extend
And huge Ionic pillars grand,
And pediments with mosaic work,
And spandrel spires that stately stand.
And if, by chance, I peep me thro'
The burnish'd gates that glimmer, where
None but wealthy enter, I
Can see the flowing tracery there.

But yet, with all that art can give,
And yet with all that wealth can show,
Give, give to me the humble cot
Where virtue sweet and friendship glow.
Give me the humble peasant home
Where friendship falls like April show'r;
For there I'm known and there I'll know
The joys that mock not Heav'n's pow'r.

When in the humble cottage home
I sit beside the chimney there;
I there converse with some old man
On times and scenes and days that were.
Or there I view some mother kind
Whose deeds are love, whose words are pray'rs,
Or there I view a blushing maid
Whose burning love's parental cares.

Within that humble, rustic home
I fearless, dashing sons behold,
Whose aims are country, freedom, faith,
Whose minds are minds sincere and bold.
That humble cot's a clean, clean home
Where choicest flow'rs around are strewn,
What vernal breezes round it blow—
The balmy breeze of flow'ry June.

Give me the cot and place me from
The regal pomp of halls afar,
If in the last great wealth is found
Sweet virtue's in the first a star.
And, oh! may God protect the homes
Where friendship, love, and joy preside,
And may the homes that scoff those traits
Ne'er in the light of joy abide.



"KNOCKNAGOW"



Italia's isles may pleasure give,
And Greece's far-fam'd classic shore,
Where ev'ry step doth tend to fall
On scenes bedew'd by ancient lore.
Yet dearer far to me doth shine
One humble spot—an Irish glade—
Fam'd Knocknagow—grand Knocknagow—
By Kickam, dear, so famous made.

Ah, how I'd love to pass my time
Within that dear, historic glen,
Where gallant Matt, a country's pride;
Let forth, to fame, his hurling men.
And even now, 'mid Connacht hills,
I seem to hear the fideog's tone,
So sweetly piped by Heff'ran young—
Alas, such men and times have flown.
Tho' life were void of ev'ry joy
And dark'ning woes should round us cling,
Old Wattle-toes, true Irish wit,
Would make the soul with pleasure ring.
What happiness and rural joy
O'er far-fam'd Knocknagow once shone;
How sad I feel when this I say;
Dear Knocknagow, alas! is gone.

Be mine the halls that gilt display ;
Be mine the peasant's lowly shed ;
Be mine the exile's lonely gloom ;
Be mine contentment's flow'ry bed ;
Be mine to wander thro' the woes,
That hourly grow but slowly fade ;
I'll ne'er forget grand Knocknagow
By Kickham, dear, so famous made.



ELEGY



On Joseph E. Landy, St. Joseph's Seminary, Baltimore, who died on Sept. 7th, 1915. Aged 22 years. R. I. P.



Life's ev'ry dream and toil for him are o'er,
And he who yesterday was but a boy,
Earth's weary course shall feel his step no more—
May his reward be life's unending joy.

The tears that mark his comrade's ev'ry cheek,
The deep regrets in sorrow's gloom array'd,
Too well betray how vain and void to seek
The heart that now in sacred clay is laid.

Sad, sad to leave in boyhood's blushing bloom,
When hopes within the heart were pulsing high,
Sad, sad to leave in life's lov'd rosy June—
One hope to cheer: We feel thy home's on high.

Deep is the gloom and sad thy fun'ral knell—
Long shall our hearts resound the parting pain,
Farewell to thee, a long and sad farewell,
'Till hearts you lov'd shall meet thee once again.

Let come the winter's gloom, or summer's rose,
To heave calm life's lone, tempest'ous sea,
Midst transient joys or life's dark ling'ring woes
We'll fondly think, our Landy lov'd on, thee.



SOMETIME



Why should he lay his secret bare,
Speak to the world his hidden woe?
You'll read his tale, somehow, somewhere,
And know.
His grief-worn heart in that dim light
Shall rise unmindful of the past,
And truth shall triumph in the fight,
At last.



A WITHERED LEAF



Ah, you're only a wither'd leaf, and yet
You dumbly tell to me a spring-time tale,
When forth you shone in vernal, bright array,
When perfume sweet you wafted o'er the vale
And, oh! perhaps, some tear-fill'd, waning eye
Did beam for joy, when you it chanced to view.
You bloom'd, perchance save by our God unseen
In sparkling glow, dress'd o'er with morning dew.

But, now, alas! death's darkling garb you wear
And gone's the bloom of spring-time's early day;
No joys you give, you start Remembrance's tear:—
I sadly think on manhood's dull decay;
Like thee indeed! the life of man is brief—
He blooms awhile, but then—a wither'd leaf.

THE DYING MINSTREL



The minstrel's hands swept o'er the keys,
A magic gloom was in the tone ;
He smiled as if a smile could ease
A soul from which sweet youth had flown.
The tears of sad regret now fill
His moist'ning eye, his heart with pain ;
He looks him to a flow'ry hill
That echo'd oft his harp's sweet strain—
And now his dying heart would fain
To make it echo once again.

Approaching death his spirit chills
And mars the joy which music gave ;
And he whose harp did wake the hills
Shall vanish soon within the grave.
He sinks ; he raves ; he dies ; he's gone !
Amidst a sorrowing peoples' wail ;
And gone's a light that brightly shone
That spread its lustre o'er the vale,
His strains no more shall rouse the dale,
For gone's that human night-in-gale.



WINTER (1915)

(A Reverie)



Thick fall the snows, keen blow the winds,
The moon is on her aerial plane,
And whistling darts the sea-gull by
As screams she by the heaving main.
And thro' the snows I see the stars
Gay gild their far allotted span ;
The kine in sheds breathe deep and free,
And nothing sadly seems but—man !

The winter's lightning darts high flit
To brighter make the starry blue;
Alone I gaze thro' mem'ry's fields
And long its first lov'd scenes to view.
But mem'ry! why disturb the calm
Oblivion wreathes around the soul?
Why wake the past or present scorn—
Should this be life's unchanging goal?

I dream! I dream! away with dreams!
I muse upon the past, and, oh!
The soul that would its peace preserve
Life's fav'rite dreams should never know;
For who, of Passion's wayward sons,
Can dream the past nor wildly long
To live, enjoy, its heav'nly spheres
Its music, mirth; its love and song?



MEMORIES!



The evening sun cast forth the gleam
That marks his parting, brightest beam,
And grand are scenes where surges roar
And, thund'ring round along the shore,
To echo in some neighb'ring cave
Where winds in madness seem to rave;
The heron sad, lone, awful, shrill,
Darts to the brake, forsakes the hill.

The mocking-bird, on tree-top high,
Pours forth her strain to ev'ning sky;
E'en tho' amid this Eden fair
My restless heart is wand'ring, where
The rivers sing and streams slow move,
Where man alike and nature love—
Where I would wander once again—
My dear Roscommon's distant plain.

I see mine Aughrim hills and brakes,
Her glancing streams and moonlit lakes;
And hills of Creve, in distance far,
Majestic rise, 'neath evening star;
Killtrustan's hills and Drummin's shore,
Mahanagh's braes I pace them o'er,
Nor can they still from vision fade—
In mem'ries varied hues arrayed.

I still, as in the long ago,
Behold the Shannon's placid flow—
However bright those scenes appear;
However dear and doubly dear;
However sweet they sound in song,
Lov'd scenes where I would linger long,
There's something still to cause a gloom—
To smite contentment's balmy bloom.

That long-lov'd light that Freedom throws
To raise a land, to smite her foes,
Is lifeless still or beams so low
We deem its fireless, sparkless glow
A light that mocks the patriot's soul—
Would that 'twere less, would that 'twere whole,
We'd fight or feel contentment's glow,
But never bend to foreign foe.

My native land that felt the flame
That springs at Valor's hallowed name,
Are all the hopes you nursed of yore
Now lifeless in your martyr's gore?
Be bold, be brave in freedom's cause,
Nor brook disdain to vandal laws,
Nor fear to fight for Ireland's own,
Nor cease to long thy Freedom flown!

VICTORY



One slight mistake he made, but did not see
At first, its full entirety.
He vainly sought to grasp and understand
The cause of his engulfing misery,
Until he heard a voice from Heaven say
That this frail saddle to full liberty,
This trifling imperfection, merest flaw
Would make his life a void, a desert wild.
With horror shrinking from the years to come
He felt an angel take him by the hand,
And he with new-born courage started on
Then soon he saw the battle fairly won
And knew again, in many years, content.
Yet they who should have helped him to the light
Marked but the trifling flaw, the armour's dent,
And not the man beneath who, struggling, bleeding
Stood fast throughout with no thought of receding.

